

# SOUTHWEST CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OPERATIONS CENTER

Fort Riley, KS



# SWCPOC Trailblazer



Issue 6-99



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Dec 99

## FROM THE TRAIL BOSS



We have ended this century on a very good note. Now we go forward into the new millennium with great hopes and expectations

for continued success. We have all worked very hard to promote, enhance, and improve personnel services. Our success is directly related to how well we worked together as a team in 1999.

Thank you all for your support and commitment. We are confident that as we

**Team Together**

**in the new millennium**

**we will achieve loftier goals!**

WE SEND BLESSINGS AND  
GOOD CHEER FOR 2000!

## *SWCPOC Fall Festival*

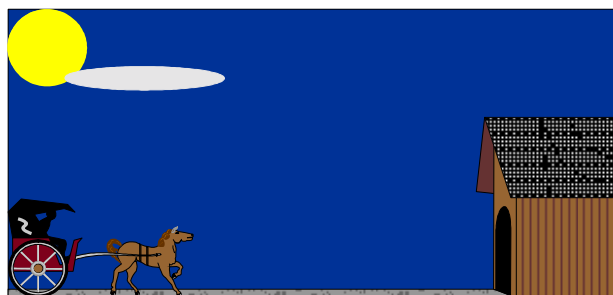
The SWCPOC recently celebrated the season with a Fall Festival. The celebration included a costume contest, decorated work areas, a parade down "Main Street" and, of course, Food! Food! and more Food!

HRDD and MSD converted their office area into "Smittyville", complete with various shops and restaurants and a loud-mouth "Mayor".

Classification Branch 2 became a divided group with Nastyville and Pleasantville, complete with "Actors" who played their roles really well.

Staffing Branch 5 mirrored one of their serviced activities by becoming a jail, complete with bars on jail cells and rowdy inmates!

The Wizard Branch blew in on a tornado to become the Land of OZ complete, with Dorothy, the Tin Man, the good witch and crew.



The entire CPOC took on a whole new character for the annual Fall Festival. The 1999 Winner of the Best

Decorated Work Area Award was Classification Branch 2. They will proudly display the roving trophy next year.

A parade of costumes down "Main Street" highlighted the talent and imagination of SWCPOC employees. The winner of the Best Costume was "Madam" - AKA Mary Pack, who won hands down - and on her last day of work, too! "Madam" Mary retired on 31 Oct.



### *Civilian Personnel is ready for Year 2000*

(Article re-printed from news release provided by CPOCMA, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD.)

As the turn of the century approaches, the Army's civilian personnel community anticipates the Y2K impact on its automated computer

**Y2K**

systems assurance that personnel actions can and will be processed timely.

The most important thing the work force needs to know about processing personnel actions in the New Year can be summarized in one word: confidence. Confidence that everything will continue as usual.

The significance of Y2K on the Army's computer systems is important because some computers only recognize the last two digits of any year. Tests conducted during the past couple years revealed that some computers cannot tell the difference between the year 1900 and 2000. This can cause problems in all computer systems. To fix the problem, computers must be reprogrammed to use four spaces for the year - 1999.

According to Tim Grey, CPOCMA Deputy Director, the Army's systems that support the civilian



personnel program have been tested and are Y2K compliant.

## **STAFFING** **THE WAGON TRAIN**

*Gulf War Veterans and Veterans of Operation Joint Endeavor -*

*Have You Checked  
Your Veteran's  
Preference Rights  
Lately?*



As part of the Defense Authorization Act for FY 98, Congress approved two new veterans' preference laws.

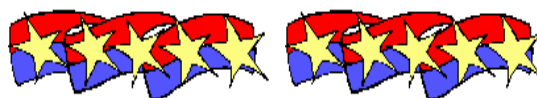
One change granted veterans' preference to anyone who served on active duty during the Gulf War period from 2 Aug 90 through 2 Jan 92.



The law granted preference to anyone who was otherwise eligible and who served on active duty during this period, regardless of where the person served or for how long.

**"Otherwise eligible"** means that the person must have been released from the service under honorable conditions and must have served a minimum of two years on active duty. Reservists are eligible if they served the full period for which called to active duty during the Gulf War period.

The other provision authorized the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for service in Bosnia during



Operation Joint Endeavor for the period 20 Nov 95 through 20 Dec 96, and for Operation Joint Guard for the period 20 Dec 96 through 20 Jun 98. Award of any Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal is qualifying for veterans' preference.

If you believe that you may be eligible for veterans' preference as a result of these changes, contact your CPAC to ensure that your veterans' preference eligibility and credit is properly applied.

It is an important right to which certain veterans are entitled and can have significant impact on personnel actions upon appointment and RIF.



### ***S&SD Supports Community Needs***

The Staffing and Services Division (S&SD) hosted several fundraisers during the year. S&SD employees had fun at bake sales, potlucks, a silent auction, and even a penny collection.

The funds collected from the fundraisers (\$925) will be used to help families in need in the Ft Riley area this holiday season.



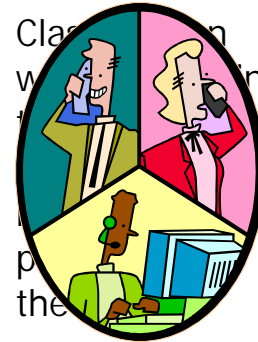
## **FORGING AHEAD WITH CLASS**

### **Classification Tidbits**

For additional help identifying organizations that are no longer in use, contact your CPAC or your commanding officer.

### ***FASCLASS and the MODERN System***

In preparation for the introduction of the MODERN System, the SWCPOC has begun the process of reviewing the civilian personnel database which includes organizational structures and encumbered and unencumbered positions.



Classification Div staff working with identifying old codes no longer in use and vacant positions shown on the MODERN System.

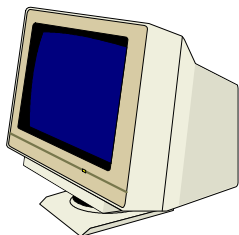
Activity POCs will be using FASCLASS to identify old structures no longer in use.

Follow these easy instructions to locate your organization:

- (1) Go into FASCLASS
- (2) Select SEARCH BY ORGANIZATION
- (3) Enter a % sign in the SEARCH FOR TEXT block, followed by the name of the organization, followed by another % sign

**(4) Click on the SEARCH button**

This will show a list of organizations by name. To look at positions, click on the line below the organizational name that reads "Show Positions."



**Generic Intern Position Descriptions**

Did you know that generic position descriptions (PDs) for interns are listed in the Position Description Library

(PDL)?

The site lists generic PDs which are intended to be used in conjunction with specific duty and task statements which are part of the Master Intern Training Plans and The Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES). These PDs will assist in the development of specialized PDs for interns.

Access the PDs at [www.cpol.army.mil](http://www.cpol.army.mil) - then select PD Library and then follow these steps:



**(1) Select "Click here to connect to the PD Library"**

**(2) Click on "Search"**

**(3) Click on the dropdown menu under the "Category" heading**

**(4) Click on "Intrn" then "Search". At this point, you will see the menu of GS-05, GS-07, and GS-09 PDs**

**Sharing in the Holiday Season**

The holiday season is fast approaching and the Classification Division will share blessings with those less fortunate. The staff will sponsor and support the "New Directions" Center in Junction City, KS. This residential support facility houses "at risk" boys between the ages of 12 and 17.



John Ray and staff of the SWCPOC Classification Div, wish you the very best this Holiday Season.

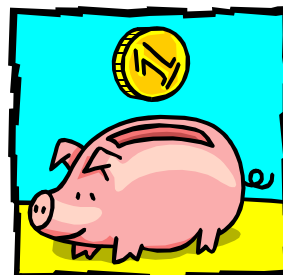
**Seasons Greetings**

We look forward to working with you in the 21st century!

**BLAZING A NEW TRAIL WITH THE A B C**

**TSP Open Season**

The Open Season for the Thrift Savings Plan began 15 Nov 99 and runs through 31 Jan 00.



Eligible employees can start or change contributions to TSP accounts or change the way

future payroll contributions are invested.



### *Change In Open Season Dates*

Effective 1 Feb 00, the dates of the open seasons will change to 15 Apr through 30 Jun and 15 Oct through 31 Dec.

The corresponding election periods will then be June and December, respectively.

This change means that FERS employees hired during the period 1 Jul through 31 Dec 99 will become eligible to participate in the TSP the first full pay period in June.

New FERS employees hired during the period 1 Jan through 31 May 00 will become eligible to participate in the TSP the first full pay period in Dec 2000.



FERS employees rehired during this period who had been previously eligible to participate in the TSP will become eligible in Jun 2000.

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## **LEARNING THE ROPES**

## **WITH HRDD**

### *You Don't Have Fear, You May Have Lack Of Confidence*



(Excerpt from article re-printed from newsletter written by practicing psychologist Phil D'Agostino.)

The way to create confidence is to review your successes and make yourself remember them each time you question your ability to do something. Never allow yourself to entertain the "yabbits" that come into your life and feed on self-confidence. You can hear them nibbling away with things like, "Yeah, but the last time...yeah, but what if...yeah, but this can really make you look bad if..." and on and on and on.

It is not enough just to be successful. You must make yourself aware of your successes and remind yourself of them when you are troubled. When you are filled with a sense of self-confidence, there will be no room for fear.

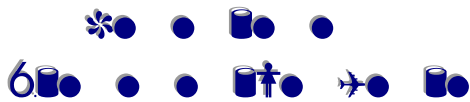
Remember that you are the master of your own emotional destiny. Do not let fear crowd out your self-confidence. With practice, you can become more confident and more successful than you ever imagined.

Interested in hearing more?

On 20 Jan, Phil D'Agostino will present  
"Maintaining Balance in the Workplace"  
via distance learning.

Contact your training coordinator  
to sign up for the class.





## Dare to Speak

(Excerpts from article submitted by Mona Skorcz)

Public speaking is one of the greatest fears in the world. More people fear speaking in front of a group of their peers than those who fear dying. Public speaking has been a dominant fear of people for centuries.

The ability to speak comfortably and confidently is a key element in professional development. If a person is able to speak before a group with ease, then it is easier to sell ideas, programs, or products. A person with public speaking skills is considered a valuable asset.

An excellent way to improve public speaking skills is to join TOASTMASTERS International. If you are interested in learning how you can improve your skills, contact your local TOASTMASTERS Club. Check in the phone book or at [www.toastmasters.com](http://www.toastmasters.com) to find out where the nearest TOASTMASTERS Club is located.

## Rotation to HRDD

(Excerpts from article submitted by Joan Kelly)

I have been in rotation to the Human Resources Development Division (HRDD) for 4 weeks and I have learned so much about what goes on in HRDD.

I have learned that without the training division, the CPOC could not function. Training plays a very important part in how we provide service to

our customers. If we do not know how to do our jobs well, then we might as well go home.



I am convinced that good quality training makes for good quality people who can then provide good quality service to our customers.

Another thing I learned is that HRDD is responsible for **Regional Training** which means training for the entire SW region! Part of the HRDD mission includes

"publicizing regional, long-term and competitive professional development opportunities."



When training classes are publicized we should take advantage of those opportunities and make sure that the evaluation form is submitted to HRDD upon completion of the training.

## Whose Customer Am I? Who Are My Customers?

(Excerpts from article submitted by Jodi Chester)

At times during my rotational assignments as a Functional Intern/Trainee, I found myself precariously perched on the edge of doubt.



I sometimes wondered whether I was going through a loss process or whether I did not totally buy into the rotational assignments or training schedules required.

In trying to define my role, I finally realized that there is a reason and a

purpose for the training and the rotational assignments. I found that I have improved my self-concept and evolved into a better personnelist through the training I have attended and the experience I have obtained.

Now I have a better understanding of who I am. As a Functional Intern/Trainee, I am an Internal Customer. I am the person that follows a defined process and uses the services passed on by other more experienced employees.

I am also an Internal Supplier of services. I am the person who passes on personnel services to our customers.

Today, as a trainee, I am one of SWCPOC's customers.



Tomorrow, I will be providing better service and products to our customers.

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## **ISD LEADING INTO THE FUTURE**

### ***MODERN DCPDS Is Coming!***

On 15 Oct 99, Army's Pacific Region deployed a new automated system called the MODERN Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (MODERN DCPDS).

The Southwest Region is tentatively scheduled to convert to the new system in June 2000.



This new system will replace the existing DCPDS system and the Functional Process Improvements (FPIs) currently in use.

SWCPOC representatives on Army's Charter Training Team are Perry Blake, Anne Brumm and Sue Simmons. They are involved in the development of training materials and will assist with the training in all the regions.



More information about MODERN DCPDS, including briefings and deployment schedules can be found at <http://www.cpol.army.mil>.



Training related information can be found on the CPOCMA web site at <http://www.cpocma.army.mil/mdcpds>.

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## **LMER PARTNERS ON THE TRAIL**

### **Online Service Gives Answers To Employment Law Questions**



If you have questions about the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Family & Medical Leave Act, the Veterans Preference Act, or how to establish and maintain a drug-free workplace, there is a Department of Labor online service that can help.

The site explains these laws and others, and includes frequently asked questions

from both an employer and employee viewpoint.

Go to <http://www.dol.gov/elaws>, and click on "All Advisors."

### Holiday Policy Reminder

Because both Christmas Day and New Year's Day fall on Saturdays this year, the Federal holidays in 1999 will be Friday, 24 Dec and Friday, 31 Dec for the majority of Federal employees who work a Monday-Friday schedule.



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Your feedback is important to us.

Send comments or suggestions to:

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